



Vox Luminis

Lionel Meunier, Founder and
Artistic Director

THU / OCT 11 / 7:30 PM

Zsuzsi Tóth

SOPRANO

Stefanie True

SOPRANO

Caroline Weynants

SOPRANO

Victoria Cassano

SOPRANO

Alexander Chance

ALTO

Jan Kullmann

ALTO

Robert Buckland

TENOR

Philippe Froeliger

TENOR

Olivier Berten

TENOR

David Lee

TENOR

Sebastian Myrus

BASS

Lionel Meunier

BASS & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Anthony Romaniuk

ORGAN

Ricardo Rodríguez Miranda

VIOLA DA GAMBA

PROGRAM

"Music for farewell"

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin (verses 1 & 4)

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

Musikalische Exequien, "Funeral Mass", Op. 7

Concert in Form einer teutschen

Begräbnis-Missa SWV 279

Motette: Herr, wenn ich nur

dich habe SWV 280

Canticum B. Simeonis: Herr, nun lässest du

deinen Diener in Friede fahren SWV 281

INTERMISSION

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Funeral Sentences

Man that born of a woman, Z. 27

In the midst of life, Z. 17a

Thou knowest, Lord, Z. 58c

Johann Sebastian Bach

Jesu meine Freude, BWV 227

Vox Luminis is grateful for the support from Wallonie-Bruxelles International for their U.S. & Canada Tour.



Wallonie - Bruxelles
International.be

For more information, visit www.voxluminis.com

Vox Luminis records for the Belgian Label Ricercar and Alpha.
MANAGEMENT: Alliance Artist Management 5030 Broadway
Suite 812 New York, NY 10034

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin

The hymn *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin* ("In peace and joy I now depart") by Martin Luther is a paraphrase in German of the Latin "*Nunc dimittis*," which is the canticle of Simeon. Luther created the text and melody in 1524, and it was first published in the same year. It has been used for funerals and appears in Schütz' *Musikalische Exequien* and Bach's chorale cantata *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin*, BWV 125.

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

Musikalische Exequien, "Funeral Mass", Op. 7

Heinrich Schütz, the greatest German composer of the 17th century, belonged to a prominent bourgeois family. Facile in many languages, Schütz also showed an early gift for music. The Landgrave Moritz, who was a distinguished musical amateur, heard him sing in 1598, and was so impressed that he invited him to his court in Kassel, where Schütz would attend the Collegium Mauritanum, a school for local nobles. At 13, Schütz joined the Landgrave's court choir and was encouraged to make music his vocation; soon after, he received a grant for two years of study in Venice under Giovanni Gabrieli, an experience that was of paramount importance for the young Schütz, who published his first important collection, a book of 19 five-part madrigals, in Italy. The evidence of Italian influence, in particular Venetian polychordal style, persists in his works, although he used German texts for most of them. After Gabrieli's death, Schütz returned to the Margrave's court as a musician, although his family persisted in discouraging him from a professional interest in music. Schütz nevertheless pursued music and spent most of his long career as music director (Kapellmeister) of the electoral chapel in Dresden. All his life, Schütz worked on constructing ways to adapt the innovations of Italian Catholic church music into a German Protestant setting. As a composer, he became known for his mastery of writing for multiple choruses, a particular specialty he learned from Gabrieli and perfected in study with Monteverdi. This style in turn influenced Bach's double-choir motets. Brahms re-discovered the music of Schütz, championing this composer who lived a century before Bach and yet was almost completely unknown to the Romantic era. A hundred years later, Stravinsky also marveled at the "unforgettable pages" of his music. Schütz was commissioned to write this mass for the funeral of Prince Heinrich Posthumus von Reuss, (1572-1635), a member of the ruling family in the region where Schütz was born. Under von Reuss' jurisdiction the area was sheltered from almost all conflict during the 30 Year's War. The exalting and magnificent *Musikalische Exequien*, a Lutheran Funeral Mass to German texts, for six to eight voices plus ripieno singers (a six-voice choir) with basso continuo accompaniment on organ, is a little known masterpiece yet one of the composer's finest works. It was written to be the introductory liturgy to the funeral service. Oddly enough, the work was little praised at the time of its composition; it has received most recognition by critics only in the last fifty years. Schütz wrote a lengthy dedication to his friend: "What good does it do if I say here that you appreciated my modest song/ And my rustic music just as much as the finest things?/ What favour-grace/ And kindness you have so often shown to me/ Because of my art: this you did immediately/ Because of my origins - I was born/ In the lands that you rule; you considered this an honour/ For yourself and for this reason you loved me even more." Von Reuss was deeply religious and planned every detail of his own funeral including how and of what the coffin should be made, the eulogy and the texts to be read. He had the copper coffin painted and the texts he chose inscribed on it. It was these texts that Schütz used in his mass. Von Reuss' widow

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

went to Schütz to ask him to write music for the occasion, as the men were friends. The funeral was Feb. 4, 1636. The Mass is subtitled "*Concert in Form einer deutschen Begräbnis Missa*" (Concerto in the Form of a German Funeral Mass) and was written for seven soloists (two sopranos, alto, two tenors and two basses called "Favoriti") and six-part chorus (divided sopranos, alto, divided tenors and bass called "Capella"). The word Concerto had been used in similar circumstances by Monteverdi to describe a sacred work for solo voices accompanied by basso continuo. In this work, Schütz distilled all the aspects of his vocal writing for different combinations of voice, using varying polyphonic and choral techniques, as well as juxtaposing the post-Lutheran German musical tradition with Italian vocal techniques; he also met the challenge of its structure in an innovative masterful way. The mass does not follow the texts of the mass as used by Lutherans but rather uses the texts chosen by von Reuss. It has two parts corresponding to the Kyrie and Gloria (which together are known as the *Missa Brevis*). The funeral procession was accompanied at the start by the chorale, sung alone (see above). The two sections of the mass are recognizable, each being introduced by a plainsong incipit with a tenor solo. The first movement was written for a single six-part chorus and would have functioned as an Introit, alternating with duets and trios by the soloists. The origins of the Kyrie are obvious: the first section is addressed, according to the German practice of the time, to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The relationship of the Gloria to the original mass texts is less straightforward, but this section has a unique, near symmetrical construction. After the tenor intonation, 16 subsections alternate with the chorus on chorale stanzas. The settings for solo voices are active and make much use of imitation. The full solo grouping only sings together in the first and last of its sections as well as in the central one. At the midpoint, the whole solo group is featured: first alto alone, then sopranos and bass, then tenor alone, then alto, the two tenor parts and bass. This is the longest section of the movement and is its formal center, including the whole text and most of the musical material. The chorus presents a different choral stanza each time, singing the same chorale as its first and last statements. The two choral sections are nearly the same but the second one is extended and elaborated. The choral section that follows the mid-point soloist section, "*Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin*" is the German hymn paraphrase of the text of the *Exequien*.

Henry Purcell (1659–1695) Funeral Sentences

Purcell was the greatest composer in the history of music in England. He was organist at the Chapel Royal and Westminster Abbey, where he is buried, and he wrote for the church, for the theater and for every kind of private performance. Like Mozart and Mendelssohn, he had a long and productive career that was condensed into a lifetime of only 36 years. Between 1690 and 1695 alone, Purcell wrote incidental music for more than forty plays, sometimes so much music as virtually to convert them into operas. *Dido and Aeneas* is his only true opera, a work in which the music advances the dramatic action instead of simply being inserted into a play. Purcell composed it in 1689 for "young gentlewomen" who were students in a London school for girls. Purcell's other very successful composition, although less well-known today, is this *Funeral Music for Queen Mary*, also known simply as *Funeral Sentences*. Queen Mary, the wife of William of Orange, was one of England's most beloved monarchs. Of the four monarchs Purcell served, his relationship with Mary was the closest: she was the only monarch for whom he composed Birthday Odes. She was one of the many victims of the smallpox epidemic of December 1694 and her death, just after Christmas, plunged the nation into genuine grief. Purcell composed the *Funeral Sentences* for her funeral in Westminster Abbey, but because the ceremony was held on March 5, 1695, he had plenty of time to plan and compose the music for the ceremony. The royal funeral was a sumptuous occasion. Black cloths were hung along the route of the procession from Whitehall to Westminster Abbey; nobility, aldermen, judges, the Lord Mayor and an enormous crowd of people paid their last respects to their much-beloved Queen. Purcell's eloquent work for the Queen's funeral can be understood as powerful masterpieces. The *Funeral Sentences* brings together music composed in 1677, perhaps originally intended for the funeral of Purcell's teacher Matthew Locke with the music written in 1694 for the Funeral of Queen Mary II. One of the choristers at the funeral, Thomas Tudway, later recalled the extraordinary effect of Purcell's music; '*I appeal to all that were present whither they ever heard any thing so rapturously fine, & solemn, & so heavenly which drew tears from all; & yet a plain, Naturall Composition; which shows the pow'r of music, when 'tis rightly fitted, & Adapted to devotional purposes.*' Ironically, Purcell's music for *Thou knowest, Lord* was performed at his own funeral in November of the same year. Just what music was performed is a matter

of argument; no autograph scores exist, and the composer left no account of his own. It is highly probable that Purcell also included a March and Canzona for brass and drums in addition to the choral anthems sung today. The brass Canzona, an energetic polyphonic piece in two related and repeated sections, was performed in the middle of the service. Trumpets and drums are known to have participated in the event, but no timpani part has been connected to the brass movements, although timpani are often included in modern performances. The music for the occasion was solemn and austere, but also illuminating and heartfelt, with a startling "Drum Processional." Purcell's solemn, stately, perfectly proportioned *Funeral March* was played on four 'flat trumpets' notable because they could play in a minor key and similar to the sackbut or the trombone, but with a slide moving backwards. The music for the quartet is notable for its repetitive sequence of variants on a very simple four- or five-note phrase. The texts for the choral pieces, having to do with the earthly life's transitory nature, fear of divine judgment, and hope for divine mercy, come from the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1660 and from Job 14: 1-2. *The Funeral Sentences*, an interlocking set of short settings of the burial texts, were probably composed in the early 1680s. Purcell's music for these emotional texts was to include effects used generally for madrigals effects as well as intense chromaticism. Each is sung first by a quartet of soloists, who are then joined by the chorus. The atmosphere of the masterpiece, *Remember not Lord, our offences* (c. 1680) is established with the first word, set as a simple block chord and reiterated as the phrase moves forward to "offences." The phrase is repeated, still in homophonic style, but in the repetition set in the relative major. "Neither take thou vengeance of our sins" is always countered with "but spare us good Lord." The music climaxes with a desperate cry for mercy; and ends, as it began, with a quiet prayer for salvation. "*Man that is born of a woman*" and "*In the midst of life we are in death*" both survive in autograph score. The first of the choral selections, "*Man that is born of a woman*," is melancholy and expressive music. The melody rises and falls in imitation of the words "he cometh up and is cast down like a flower." "*In the midst of life we are in death*" begins in the soprano section, which would almost certainly have been sung by boys in the first performance, and then is taken up by the rest of chorus, one section after another. The music is chromatic, and by the standards of the time, created a dissonant cry of anguish. Purcell uses extraordinary word painting on "the bitter pains of eternal death." *Thou know'st, Lord* is one of two

settings of this text by Purcell. This *Thou know'st, Lord* is hushed and resigned, but Purcell, in this new setting he composed for Queen Mary's funeral, has used counterpoint that is quite involved; his more serene homophonic setting of the same anthem makes a fitting conclusion. The simplicity and brevity of the second setting of this anthem completely express the composer's restrained grief.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) Jesu meine Freude ("Jesus, my joy") BWV 227

Jesu meine Freude is the earliest, longest, and most musically complex and the most well-known of the five motets Bach composed; what is sometimes referred to as a sixth motet is probably a movement from a lost cantata. *Jesu meine Freude*, BWV 227, was most likely written in 1723 for the funeral of Johanna Maria Käsin, the wife of Leipzig's postmaster. As with all Bach's motets, the work calls for voices only, without any instrumental component other than light keyboard accompaniment, unlike his cantatas which had more elaborate instrumental forces. A motet is generally a choral piece set to a sacred text, although examples do exist of motets for accompanied solo voices. The motet (derived from the French *mot*, meaning word) came into being in the 13th century when words, were added to the upper parts of passages of organum (from Gregorian Chant, organum meant two melodic lines moving simultaneously note against note). The motet did not become the predominant form of church music until the 16th century when imitation and counterpoint were used to illustrate each phrase of text. Although Bach may have composed a few more motets than are now extant, he did not compose many because the cantata, which had solo arias, independent orchestral parts and poetic texts, had become the dominant form. When writing in the German motet tradition, Bach used fugal writing; he also used techniques that he took from vocal and instrumental concertos, juxtaposing fast and slow movements. He found few stylistic barriers between the various genres in which he cast his music; there seems to have been no rigid dividing line for him between instrumental melodies and sung arias or phrases. He wrote almost every one of his cantatas for performance on a specific Sunday of the church calendar, but his motets are pieces he composed for a specific occasion, often commissioned for performance at funerals of distinguished citizens. The intimately expressive motet's overall message is one of victory of "life of the spirit" over "death of the flesh"

through the resurrection of Christ. Its text is based on a strict alternation of strophes, in a somewhat unlikely match of the rather saccharine hymn stanzas of *Jesu, meine Freude* by the poet Johann Franck and a chorale melody by Johann Crüger with stern verses from the Bible, *Romans* 8:1-2 and 9-11, St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Although it was not unusual in Lutheran motets to include chorale and Biblical text, Bach did so with ease and successful dramatic alternation, crafting a perfectly symmetrical work, giving much thought to providing balance and unity. The structural plan of *Jesu, meine Freude* distinguishes it from any other work of its time. The odd-numbered movements of the motet are all varied treatments of the hymn tune; the even numbers are free settings of the Bible text. Bach gives the work musical, literary and devotional equilibrium by balancing the movements symmetrically around the central fugue of No. 6. Thus Nos. 1 and 2, for example are almost identical with Nos. 11 and 10. Bach intersperses six verses of the hymn with five passages from St. Paul's Epistle, musically giving each hymn verse its own individual treatment, sometimes expanding upon the hymn tune at great length with vivid dramatic effect, especially in verses 3 and 5. The motet has eleven short movements can be divided into three groups of settings: choral tune and text (nos. 1, 3, 7, 11); free settings of the chorale (nos. 5 and 9) and settings of the extra biblical text (nos. 2, 4, 6, 8, 10). The whole piece is centered on the fugal number 6; either side of this are two groups (nos. 3-5 and nos. 7-9) containing a chorale, a trio and an aria-like movement. Numbers 2 and 10 have material in common and numbers 1 and 11 use identical music. Bach gave this motet an unusual feature: he included two solo trio sections (Nos. 4 and 8) in a genre that, in its traditional Lutheran form, is purely choral. The choral writing is in five parts, although several strophes of the hymn are set in simple four-part harmonizations. Among theories concerning the work's genesis is the suggestion that it is a work that was developed over time, the earliest music possibly dating back many years to the composer's pre-Leipzig period. Evidence to support such a notion comes from the lack of any real relationship between the Biblical text and the chorale, normally a carefully considered matter in the Lutheran motet. It was most likely written for the funeral of Frau Kee, the wife of a Leipzig official. The underlying idea is the opposition of the flesh and the spirit, and the whole motet revolves around a centerpiece expressing this, the fugue "*ihr aber nicht fleischlich sondern geistlich*." Some passages seem to have an early Weimar provenance, particularly the sublime "*Gute Nacht*" in the heart of the

motet, a duet for sopranos, to which the tenors provide vocal continuo, with the altos in the middle with a different version of the hymn tune than the one used in the other five chorale movements. In the 5th movement, Bach conjures the medieval image of "the old dragon" with the graphic vividness of a painter like Cranach or a Grünewald and opposes it with the powerful image of Luther himself, fearless in his isolated rebellion ("ich steh hier und singe") and brave and unmovable in his defiance ("in gar sichrer Ruh"). The motet begins with a four-part setting of the chorale *Jesu meine Freude*. The last movement of the motet is an identical four-part setting, but using the last verse of the chorale *Weicht, ihr Trauergeister* [go away, ye spirits of sorrow.] The 2nd movement speaks of those who are 'in Christ,' while the penultimate movement refers to the Spirit of Christ dwelling 'in you.' Much of the same musical material is contained in both verses. The 4th movement is a trio for high voices, the fourth to last, a trio for low voices, while in the center is the fugue of exquisite tenderness and lyricism.

Program notes © Susan Halpern, 2018.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

VOX LUMINIS is a Belgian early music vocal ensemble created in 2004 by Artistic Director Lionel Meunier. The ensemble performs over 60 concerts a year, appearing on stages in Belgium, across Europe and around the world. Since its inception, the ensemble has been defined by its unique sound, appealing as much through the personality of each timbre as it does through the color and the uniformity of the voices. The size and composition of the group depends on the repertoire, with the core of soloists, mostly from the Royal Conservatory of the Hague, often joined by additional performers. The repertoire is essentially Italian, English and German and spans from the 16th to the 18th century. Vox Luminis boasts 12 albums on the labels Alpha Classics, Ricercar, Ramée and Musique en Wallonie. These recordings have enjoyed international critical acclaim, and have won numerous prizes including the prestigious Gramophone Recording of the Year in 2012 for the *Musicalische Exequien* by Heinrich Schütz. Vox Luminis has performed in prestigious venues such as Wigmore Hall in London, the Oratoire du Louvre in Paris, the Auditoria Nacional de Música in Madrid, the Concertgebouw in Brugge, the Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam and the Tivoli Vredenburg in Utrecht. Residencies for the ensemble have been held at the Abbey of Sainte-Marie-des-Dames, the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels, the Concertgebouw in Brugge, the prestigious Festival of Early Music in Utrecht and the "Musique et Mémoire Festival." In 2017, the Aldeburgh Festival in England, founded by Benjamin Britten, hosted the ensemble for the first time.

LIONEL MEUNIER is a singer and the founder/artistic director of the early music vocal ensemble Vox Luminis. Being passionate about music from a very young age, he started his musical education in the city of Clamecy (France) with the trumpet, recorder and solfège. Lionel then continued his studies at Institut Supérieur de Musique et de Pédagogie (the Superior Institute of Music and Pedagogy -

IMEP) in Namur where he earned his degree in recorder with great distinction. Meunier then focused his attention on vocal at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague (NL). At the same time, he started a career as a concert musician. He was soon in demand as a soloist, and he joined prestigious ensembles like Collegium Vocale Ghent (P. Herreweghe), World Youth Choir, Arsys Bourgogne (P. Cao), Amsterdam Baroque Choir (T. Koopmann), the Chamber Choir of Namur, the Favoriti de la Fenice (J. Tubéry), the Soloists of the Chamber Choir of Namur, Cappella Pratensis (S. Bull) and the soloists of the Dutch Bach Vereniging (J. Van Veldhoven). He has been increasingly in demand from many ensembles throughout Europe as coach, conductor and artistic leader. His passionate yet thoughtful approach to the early music and a capella repertoire, combined with the understanding of and respect for the singers, has allowed him to achieve progressively ever-higher standards. Moreover, he is jury member for many international festivals and competitions.

OLIVIER BERTEN joined the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles, where he obtained a Higher Diploma in opera singing under Marcel Vanaud. He studied with Udo Reinemann and other famous names at the Conservatories of Amsterdam, Metz and Brussels. He studied baroque singing with Monique Zanetti and Greta De Reyghere. During the 2004-2005 season, he was member of the Operastudio Vlaanderen in Ghent. He used to regularly perform on opera scenes in Brussels (*Eliogabalo*, *Werther*, *Orlando furioso*), Flanders (*Villa Vivaldi*) and Wallonia (*Ne criez pas au loup* and *Sybil et les silhouettes*). He also worked with ensembles like the Liège Philharmonic Orchestra (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*), the Flanders Symphony Orchestra (Rossini for kids) and la Petite Bande (*Matthew Passion*). He is a regular member of the Scherzi Musicali, Vox Luminis and Cappella Pratensis ensembles. The recordings he shares with them are very much appreciated by both the critics and the audiences.

The lyrical tenor **ROBERT BUCKLAND** received his early musical training as a chorister at Regensburg Cathedral. During his studies, he has performed regularly with some of Europe's top ensembles including the Huelgas Ensemble, Collegium Vocale Gent and the Dutch Bach Society. As a soloist Robert has performed both Arias and the Evangelist in J. S. Bach's *Christmas and Passion Oratorios*, as well as other oratorios by Medelssohn, Keiser, Stradella, Monteverdi and Telemann, several Haydn, Schubert and Mozart masses, numerous (Bach) cantatas, requiems and operas such as Handel's *Acis and Galathea* (Acis), *Siroe* (Arasse), *Lotario* (Berengario), Haydn's *Philemon und Baucis* (Philemon), Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (Aeneas), *King Arthur and The Fairy Queen*. He performed Robert Schumann's *Dichterliebe* in New York and Franz Schubert's *die Schöne Müllerin* in Oslo and the Hague. Robert studied at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague and had masterclasses with Michael Chance, Jill Feldman and Marius van Altena. He finished his studies cum laude in and was a member of the ensemble of the Operastudio Nederland in the season 2008/09. He is currently being taught by Reinhard Becker.

The Spanish-English mezzosoprano **VICTORIA CASSANO** (Madrid, 1987) specializes in the historically informed performance of Renaissance and Baroque music, focusing mainly on ensemble music and oratorio. Following her passion for ensemble singing, she regularly collaborates with ensembles such as Vox Luminis, La Capella Reial de Catalunya, the Nederlandse Bach Vereniging and Musica Temprana. She is also a founding member of The Windsor Consort, a vocal ensemble specializing in the performance of English and Italian madrigals. Since 2014, she has been part of the Young Bach Fellowship of the Nederlandse Bach Vereniging. Recent opera appearances include the role of Eduige in the opera *Rodelinda* by Haendel and the role of Arethuze in *La descente d'Orphee aux Enfers* by Charpentier. Victoria began her musical studies playing both piano

and violin in her hometown. In 2008, she graduated from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, with a Bachelor's degree in Music Teaching. In 2009, she decided to move to The Netherlands to study Early Music Singing at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. During her Master's studies, she specialized in the performance of Spanish sacred music of the 17th Century, and she obtained her Master's degree in Early Music Singing.

ALEXANDER CHANCE graduated in 2015 having read Classics at New College, Oxford, where he was a choral scholar under the direction of Edward Higginbottom for three years, and then of Robert Quinney for one. Many opportunities for solo performances came his way all over the world, most notably in Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, where he sang the alto arias in Bach's *St John Passion*. He also made a number of recordings with the New College Choir, including a recent CD of John Blow symphony anthems, on which he features as a soloist. Recent solo appearances include Handel's *Messiah* with Richard Cooke at Canterbury Cathedral, Bach's *St John Passion* with Mark Deller at St Mary's Ashford, *Christmas Oratorio* with Robert Quinney at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, *Magnificat* with Edward Higginbottom at King's Place in London, *St Matthew Passion* with Geraint Bowen at Hereford Cathedral, the role of 'Micah' in Handel's *Samson* at Stour Music, B Minor Mass with Vox Luminis in Utrecht and regularly in Oxford with Tom Hammond-Davies and the Oxford Bach Soloists. Upcoming projects include Handel's *Triumph of Time and Truth* at King's Place in London in October, and Purcell's *King Arthur* at Stour Music. He also sings regularly with The Tallis Scholars and the Gesualdo Six.

The French tenor **PHILIPPE FROELIGER** began his musical study in the conservatory of his home town, Strasbourg, at age 6. For 8 years, he studied piano, ballet dance and sang as a boy soprano in choirs. Then came proper singing studies (Bachelor

degree in 1995), as well as choir conducting, harmony, counterpoint and music history. He has given concerts as a soloist with mainly French ensembles (Akadèmia, La Fenice, Mora Vocis) and is frequently invited by ensembles like Pygmalion, Les Éléments, Sequenza 9.3. He is a regular member of Vox Luminis since 2009.

Countertenor **JAN KULLMANN** was born in Germany, where he began his musical training as a chorister in Jugendkantorei Hösel. He completed a Master's degree in Early Music Singing and Historical Performance Practice at The Royal Conservatory of The Hague. His operatic roles include Handel's Siroe, Lotario (with Contrasto Armonico) and Medoro (Combattimento Consort Amsterdam), San Giovanni Battista by Stradella and St. Eustachio by Lanciani (Les Muffatti). He also appeared as Ottone in Handel's *Agrippina* in the Teatro Comunale di Modena (Opera2Day), and in the title role in Handel's *Orlando* at the Scottish Opera. Jan's concert repertoire includes solo parts in J.S. Bach's passions and oratorios as well as Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*. He has also performed a leading role in a modern theatre production, *Biest* by De Wetten van Kepler. Jan has worked as a soloist throughout Europe and the Americas with orchestras and ensembles such as Concerto Köln, Capriccio Basel, Wrocław Baroque Orchestra, Düsseldorf Symphonie, Stavanger Symphonie and Combattimento Consort Amsterdam. Jan is a co-founder of the vocal soloist ensemble Vox Luminis.

Hailing from Glasgow, **DAVID LEE** enjoys a multi-faceted musical career as a singer, teacher, researcher, writer and administrator. He studied Music as an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford, where he was also a Choral Scholar, graduating with first-class honours. Following this, David went on to complete Master's and Doctoral degrees in Historical Musicology at the University of Glasgow, under the supervision of the noted Bach scholar

and conductor John Butt. David's dissertation focused on the emergence of musical composition as a professional activity in early modern Lutheran Germany, and was generously supported by a scholarship from the government's Arts & Humanities Research Council. As a singer, David works across Europe, appearing with leading early music ensembles including Dunedin Consort, I Fagiolini, Nederlandse Bachvereniging, Concerto Copenhagen and the Academy of Ancient Music. He is also regularly invited to perform contemporary music with ensembles including the Britten Sinfonia and London Voices, and has appeared on numerous film and video game soundtracks, most recently including *Jurassic World* and *World of Warcraft*. He has taught at the University of Glasgow, and is frequently invited to write program notes for events including the Edinburgh International Festival, Kings Place and St John's, Smith Square, and to speak at venues including London's Wigmore Hall.

SEBASTIAN MYRUS began his musical training as boys choirister in Windsbach. He studied singing at the Academy of Music and Theatre in his hometown of Munich, Germany. During his studies at the Academy he joined the Opera School at the Bavarian Theatre Academy and started his operatic career. His engagements included Giove in Cavalli's *La Calisto*, Bottom in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Calchas in Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène* and Batone in Rossini's *L'Inganno Felice*. He performed Stravinsky's *Rake's Progress* at the Bavarian State Opera, Purcell's *King Arthur* at the Markgräflisches Opernhaus Bayreuth, the world premiere of Thomas Jennefelt's opera, *Paulus*, for the Deutsches Theater in Berlin and Handel's *Siroe* for the Handel Festival in Halle. Sebastian regularly performed and recorded with numerous acclaimed groups and ensembles, including the Athesinus-Consort Berlin, Polyharmonique, the Netherlands Bach Society and the Collegium Vocale Gent. As soloist Sebastian Myrus has worked with Freiburg Baroque

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Orchestra, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Barocksolisten München, Les Muffatti, Orchestre des Champs-Élysées, Baroque Orchestra of Seville and the Doha Baroque Ensemble. Sebastian is a core member of the prize-winning vocal ensemble Vox Luminis which performs regularly at renowned international festivals.

Pianist/harpsichordist/improviser **ANTHONY ROMANIUK** inhabits a diverse musical environment incorporating solo recitals, concertos, chamber music and baroque basso continuo alongside frequent forays outside the classical realm. His repertoire spans several centuries; from Byrd, Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Brahms – often on historical instruments – to Crumb, Ligeti and 21st-century industrial noise music. Frequent collaborators include Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Pieter Wispelwey and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Other noteworthy collaborations in the 2017/18 season include performances with the JACK Quartet, and Danish Indy rock band Efterklang, as well as Schumann and Liszt lieder with young star tenor Reinhoud Van Mechelen.

ZSUZSI TÓTH was born in Hungary where she began her musical studies with the piano at the age of seven. She started classical singing at the *Faculty of Music of the University of Szeged*, receiving a Master's degree in 2004. She went on to specialize in Early Music at the *Royal Conservatory of The Hague*, where she was awarded a Bachelor's degree, and, in 2009, earned her Master's with distinction as a student of Peter Kooij, Jill Feldman and Rita Dams. She also participated in masterclasses given by Martin Klieemann, Mitsuko Shirai, Júlia Hamari, Marius van Altena, László Polgár and Adrienne Csengery and received coaching from Charles Toet and Nigel North. During her studies she won a Hungarian State Grant (2002-3), as well as the Huygens Programma Scholarship in The Netherlands (2006-7). Zsuzsi has won prizes in several international singing competitions and was the first-prize winner in both the *Gyurkovics Mária*

Singing Competition (Budapest, Hungary 2003) and the *Simándy József Singing Competition (Szeged, Hungary 2004)*. She performs regularly throughout Europe and beyond and has appeared as soloist with *Collegium Vocale Gent (Philippe Herreweghe)*, *Nederlandse Bach Vereniging (Jos van Veldhoven)*, *Goeyvaerts Trio*, *Les Muffatti*, *Pannon Filharmonikusok* and *Tetraktys (Kees Boeke)*. She has been a regular member of *Vox Luminis* for 10 years.

Canadian born **STEFANIE TRUE** has enjoyed performing worldwide, and is a singer equally at ease on both opera and concert stages. Highlights include the role of Celia in Händel's *Lucio Silla* at the Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen, the role Poppea in Händel's *Agrippina* at The Grange Festival, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* in San Francisco with Voices of Music, the Israelite woman in Händel's *Esther* with La Risonanza led by Fabio Bonizzoni, Bach Cantatas with the Lutherse Bach Ensemble led by Ton Koopman and a tour of the Netherlands with Medieval ensemble Tetraktys led by Kees Boeke. She also continues to tour worldwide with Vox Luminis and reappears this season as soprano soloist with Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and Handel's *Messiah*. In 2011, Stefanie placed first in the London Handel Singing Competition (Adair Prize) and won second prize in the John Kerr Award competition 2010 in Kent, UK. She studied voice with Catherine Robbin at York University (Toronto), and has a Master's in Early Music from the Royal Conservatory in The Hague.

CAROLINE WEYNANTS is a Belgian soprano specializing in Baroque Music. She has been working with many well-known international ensembles and recorded numerous discs. She graduated in the Royal Conservatoire of Liège (Belgium) in 2003 obtaining a Classical Singing and Chamber Music diploma. In 1998, she joined Namur Chamber Choir (Centre d'Art Vocal & de Musique Ancienne – CAV&MA), where she forged her career as a choir singer and soloist. She has performed with the best European ensembles of

Baroque music. She has sung in many festivals and concert halls nationally and internationally. In addition to her long involvement with CAV&MA, her main engagements are with Correspondances (S. Daucé) and Vox Luminis as a core member of both ensembles.

RICARDO RODRÍGUEZ MIRANDA (Viola da Gamba) was born in Caracas where he studied piano and violoncello at the Escuela de Música "Juan Manuel Olivares." In 1989, with the ensemble Musica Rhetorica, he recorded "Les Concerts Royaux" by F. Couperin, the first baroque music recording on CD made in Venezuela. He became a member of the Camerata de Caracas. Ricardo began his studies of viola da gamba with Wieland Kuijken at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. For this study he was awarded a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture in Venezuela (CONAC). Ricardo took master classes with Jordi Savall in Spain. In 1998, he received the Teachers and Performers Diploma and began to study Musicology for 4 years at the University of Utrecht. Ricardo Rodriguez Miranda performs regularly with Vox Luminis, Nederlandse Bachvereniging, L'armonia sonora and Margaretha Consort. He performs as a soloist in Bach's *St. John's* and *St. Matthew's Passion* with several Dutch orchestras like the Het Residentie Orkest. He has participated in many CD recordings which have been awarded with Diapason D'or (Camerata de Caracas, Nederlandse Bachvereniging, Leclair's Violin Sonatas and Vox Luminis). His repertoire extends from the Middle Ages, the great masters of the Baroque Era and compositions of Calliope Tsoupaki to his own improvisations on the viola da gamba based on Early Music and the music of his native Venezuela. At the moment, he performs regularly and teaches viola da gamba and piano privately. Since September 2011, Ricardo has taught French Baroque Music and Dance at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague.